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Viewing cable 07MANAGUA982, ALN PLANNING ROBUST OPPOSITION, BUT STARVED FOR

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Understanding cables

Every cable message consists of three parts:

- The top box shows each cables unique reference number, when and by whom it originally was sent, and what its initial classification was.
- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
- The bottom box presents the body of the cable. The opening can contain a more specific subject, references to other cables ([browse by origin](#) to find them) or additional comment. This is followed by the main contents of the cable: a summary, a collection of specific topics and a comment section.

To understand the justification used for the classification of each cable, please use this [WikiSource](#) article as reference.

Discussing cables

If you find meaningful or important information in a cable, please link directly to its unique reference number. Linking to a specific paragraph in the body of a cable is also possible by copying the appropriate link (to be found at the paragraph symbol). Please mark messages for social networking services like Twitter with the hash tags **#cablegate** and a hash containing the reference ID e.g. **#07MANAGUA982**.

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
07MANAGUA982	2007-04-19 15:33	2011-08-30 01:44	CONFIDENTIAL	Embassy Managua

Appears in these articles:

<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-30/Mundo/NotasSecundarias/Mundo2758456.aspx>
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-30/Mundo/NotasSecundarias/Mundo2758467.aspx>
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<http://www.confidencial.com.ni/articulo/3966/la-ldquo-injerencia-rdquo-de-ee-uu-en-el-2006>
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-23/Mundo/Relacionados/Mundo2758764.aspx>
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-23/Mundo/NotaPrincipal/Mundo2758753.aspx>
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<http://www.confidencial.com.ni/articulo/4040/la-ldquo-injerencia-rdquo-de-venezuela-en-2006>
<http://www.confidencial.com.ni/articulo/4047/rodrigo-barreto-enviado-de-ldquo-vacaciones-rdquo>
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-16/Mundo/NotasSecundarias/Mundo2757239.aspx>
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-16/Mundo/NotaPrincipal/Mundo2746658.aspx>
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-16/Mundo/Relacionados/Mundo2757244.aspx>
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-16/Mundo/Relacionados/Mundo2746673.aspx>
<http://www.confidencial.com.ni/articulo/3991/dra-yadira-centeno-desmiente-cable-diplomatico-eeuu>
<http://www.confidencial.com.ni/articulo/3968/pellas-pronostico-a-eeuu-victoria-de-ortega-en-2006>
<http://www.confidencial.com.ni/articulo/3967/barreto-era-ldquo-fuente-confiable-rdquo-para-eeuu>

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RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHINGTON DC

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAGUA 000982

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR WHA/CEN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/17/2017
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [KDEM](#) [NU](#)
SUBJECT: ALN PLANNING ROBUST OPPOSITION, BUT STARVED FOR FUNDS

REF: MANAGUA 0953

Classified By: Ambassador Paul Trivelli for reasons 1.4 (b and d)

¶1. (C) Summary: Leaders of the Nicaraguan Liberal Alliance (ALN) are planning new strategies to confront the Ortega administration, but the party faces a severe funding shortage and considerable campaign debt. The party is conflicted on how to approach the 2008 municipal elections and whether the price for an alliance with the Liberal Constitutional Party (PLC) would have to somehow include a role for convicted PLC leader Arnoldo Aleman. End Summary.

¶2. (C) Ambassador and Emboffs met with ALN leaders Eduardo Montealegre, Maria Eugenia Sequeira, and Kitty Monterrey on April 17 to discuss the party's opposition plans and strategy for the 2008 municipal elections. Other topics included their recent IRI-sponsored meeting with PAN officials in El Salvador (which they described as "excellent") and the trumped-up charges the government plans to inveigh against Montealegre for his alleged role in the Cenis banking scandal. Sequeira asked us, after Montealegre left, to provide "moral support" to him during this particularly trying time.

Reluctant Donors Keep ALN on the Brink of Bankruptcy

¶3. (C) Kitty Monterrey described the dire financial circumstances of the party, which still carries \$1.2 million of debt from its 2006 campaign. Monterrey claimed that the party needs at least \$50,000 per month to maintain a minimal presence and structure, and \$100,000 per month to challenge the dominance of the established parties and pay off debt. Some months, she admitted, the party only receives \$4,000 for operating expenses.

¶4. (C) Monterrey explained that the main problem is that potential contributors are afraid of persecution from FSLN-controlled judges, police, and municipalities if they are associated with the ALN. Montealegre commented that the FSLN is monitoring the communications of all government employees, creating an atmosphere of intimidation. They again requested our assistance in convincing the private sector to support the ALN.

Plans to Sustain Party and Confront Ortega

¶5. (C) Despite the ALN's precarious financial situation, Monterrey and Sequeira continue to seek NGO-sponsored projects to keep the party active and responsive to the

community. They are designing a media campaign using ALN deputies and local leaders to get the party's message on the airwaves.

16. (C) Montealegre plans to confront the Ortega administration in his role as Assembly deputy by refusing to meet with any government officials in FSLN headquarters and by rejecting any official correspondence with the new emblem that violates the constitution. (He said the ALN will propose a bill naming the Taiwan-donated building as the official office of the Presidency). Montealegre will encourage the international community to take the same stance. Montealegre believes that the best way to weaken Ortega is by emphasizing his pact with Aleman and the fact that this "prisoner" is now able to move freely about the country. Montealegre opined that the donors should threaten to cut off budget support unless Aleman is returned to house arrest.

Unity With PLC is "Impossible Without Aleman"

17. (C) Montealegre admitted that the ALN is divided on how to approach the municipal elections. Some Liberals, including many in the private sector, insist on unity to confront the FSLN, regardless of Aleman's role or influence. Others reject Aleman completely and believe that the ALN should focus on internal strengthening or possibly an alliance with the Sandinista Renovation Movement (MRS), while allowing the PLC to wither. When asked about plans to promote unity at the municipal level (reftel), Montealegre skeptically responded that unity with the PLC at any level is "impossible without Aleman." Montealegre also warned that Ortega and Aleman are scheming to postpone the municipal elections until 2011 to coincide with the presidential and National Assembly elections, explaining that he had seen a copy of a letter

from Aleman to the mayor of Rivas instructing the mayor to back this initiative.

18. (C) Sequeira was confident that the ALN could triumph in the municipal elections by attracting disenchanted PLC voters, and commented that any deal with Aleman would drive away the ALN's core anti-pact constituency. Montealegre and Monterrey were less optimistic, but did not present alternative strategies. They agreed with us that the ALN must begin to identify strong mayoral candidates to fortify the party's position whether running independently or in an alliance.

Comment

19. (C) The ALN's weaknesses stem from insufficient financing, but also a lack of organization that has left many motivated and capable individuals underutilized. Sequiera and Monterrey claimed that they are "doing everything" for the party. This is not entirely true, but certainly a small number of individuals make decisions and accomplish the vast majority of the work. Montealegre could alleviate this situation by empowering more deputies and party officials to pursue key objectives. The technical assistance provided by IRI may help overcome barriers of communication and trust that have prevented this.

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